



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

Celebrating 33 Years of Leadership & Advocacy

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Janet A. Neal
1st Vice President

John B. Troost
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SUMMARY OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, September 17, 2008, in Room 140 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by 1st Vice President Janet A. Neal at 1:20 p.m. Roll call was taken by Ms. Rosemary Osuna, Commission Staff and the following Commissioners were present at the meeting: 1st Vice President Janet A. Neal, 2nd Vice President John B. Troost, Commissioners Wan Chun Chang, Donna Pomerantz, Harley D. Rubenstein, and Alexia Teran. President Kecia B. Weller, Treasurer Bernard Siegel, Commissioners Michael G. Gureckas, Maria Mustelier-Parrish, Wendy L. Welt, and Sheila D. Wright were not present. There was not a sufficient number of Commissioners present to constitute a quorum.

APPROVAL OF THE August 20, 2008 MINUTES

Due to lack of a quorum, the minutes of the meeting of August 20, 2008, were deferred to the next meeting for approval.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jesse Padilla addressed the issue of support and advocacy for accessibility to voters' registration for people with physical and developmental disabilities.

Magda Carrero spoke about providing assistance for the developmentally and physically disabled members of the community in registering to vote.

Linda Block appealed for everyone to write the Governor to protest Senate Bill SB60 which grants driver's licenses to undocumented aliens, and will also activate the Real ID Act, which may violate citizens' privacy.

Daniel Garcia reported on the rally held by Community Rehabilitation Services to call attention to the State budget which has not been signed.

Martin Browne, Accessibility Coordinator, City of Whittier, announced the 6th Annual Expo of Disabilities Awareness Month entitled "Celebrating Abilities Expo" to be held on October 21, 2008, between 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Parnell Park.

Joan Taylor, Ed.D. Director for Senior Opportunities, reported that 6,000 out of 12,000 individuals with disabilities, including seniors, were taken off the taxi program of MTA, and requested the Commission's support in reinstating the program.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Neal reported that she joined the National Association of Professional Women (NAPW), which is significant in that it doesn't have any members with disabilities. She announced that the Disabilities Commission will have its information posted on the NAPW website.

She also commented on the MTA train accident and her concern for the victims and the emergency units.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. Rosemary Osuna, Commission Staff, reported the following:

- Save-the-Date cards for the Access Awards Luncheon scheduled for October 20, 2008, were placed in the Commission's packets for distribution.
- The Los Angeles County Commission for Women-sponsored Run/Walk for Health held on Saturday, September 13, 2008, had a LAC Commission on Disabilities exhibitor table with promotional items, brochures and Access Awards luncheon flyers.
- The Commissioners are all invited to attend the "Brown Act Workshop" on September 18, 2008, at the Hall of Administration. RSVPs are required.
- Staff is working on a motion to be placed before the Board to proclaim October 15th as Disability Mentoring Day.

PRESENTATION BY ALEX GHAFFARI ON THE STEVE GRISSOM RELIEF FUND

Mr. Alex Ghaffari reported that he is a life-long victim of HIV/AIDS since birth because of infected blood transfusions at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. 114 infants and children were also infected by these same transfusions.

As a result of advocacy by the families of those affected, the Steve Grissom Relief Fund Act was introduced in 2002 by Senator John Edwards and was most recently co-authored by Representative Henry Waxman and introduced in the House in 2005. The Act directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make single “compassionate payments” to individuals infected with HIV or diagnosed with AIDS as a result of being treated with HIV-contaminated blood from July 1, 1982 through December 31, 1987. A similar bill was passed into law, but it was limited to compensation to hemophiliacs and not to others who were infected through transfusions.

Mr. Ghaffari asked the Commission for its support by possibly bringing his cause to the Board’s attention. Due to lack of a quorum, the Commission could not make a motion to act on his request.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

1st Vice President Neal reported that a Commission workshop and the election process were discussed at the last meeting.

Public Relations Committee

Commissioner Neal reported the following:

- The Commission table at the Commission for Women’s 5K Run was highly successful.
- Information about the Commission’s radio program -- “Disability Network” -- on KTYM 1460 AM has been posted to the Commission’s website.
- Commissioner Neal has secured a captioning service for her own

- radio show.
- Commission's radio show guests included the hosts of "Alive And Well With HIV".

Events Committee

Access Awards Luncheon

Commissioner Neal reported the following:

- She announced the Access Awards winners selected by the Supervisors from the Districts:
 - 1st District:** Salvation Army.—Harbor Light Center
 - 2nd District:** Sandy Varga, Disability Rights Advocate
 - 2nd District Leadership Award:** Michael Agyin, Disability Rights Advocate
 - 3rd District:** Braille Institute.
 - 4th District:** Chuck Martrucci, Community Service Coordinator,
City of Lakewood
 - 5th District:** Lou Bozigian, Owner, Caldwell Banker Realty.
- Ms. Glenda Wina will return as the host for the event. The Color guard has not been secured, and Commissioner Neal invited the Commission to provide contact information of groups such as Girl, Boy, and Cub Scout troops, Veteran groups, etc. that would like to volunteer for the event.
- All Commissioners are in good standing this year, and are entitled to a complimentary ticket to the event. Additionally, members of the Events Committee – Chris Gabler and Sandy Eisenberg – will be receiving a complimentary ticket. The price of a ticket is set at \$60 a seat and \$500 for a table. Supervisor Burke and the Mayor of the City of Lakewood are planning to attend.
- Staff is working with the 2nd District to secure Supervisor Burke's "Lady of Firsts" exhibit to be displayed at the event.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

ASI Report

Commissioner Rubenstein reported he is experiencing problems attaining recertification, which has become a highly inconvenient situation.

Kurt Hagen, Office of Affirmative Action Compliance (OAAC), reported on the following:

- Access Services had its first retiree – Mr. William McCullough.
- The Operations Report that is distributed to the Board and can be obtained by members of the public upon request, is in the process of being streamlined and made more user-friendly.
- Due to the increase in ridership, Access Services is already 400,000 above budget where they should be this time of year. The increase in ridership was divided into three categories: (1) Those who ride seven times or less per month, (2) Those who ride 7 to 30 times per month, and (3) Those who ride over thirty times a month. Ridership has increased across the board which may be attributed to the increase in gas prices.
- The City of Santa Clarita received a \$500,000 grant from the Federal Government to study disabilities.
- Cheryl Hershey will be replacing Michael Winters as Director of Civil Rights at the Federal Transit Authority.
- The Board elections were held with the following changes: Doran Barnes is the new Chair; Dolores Nason, formerly the Chair, is now Vice Chair; Joyce Rooney was elected Secretary; Jan Heidt is still Treasurer; and Shelly Verinder is the Executive Director.

In response to 1st Vice President Neal's question about the Teddie Joy Remhild's issue, Mr. Hagen said that the issue was resolved in closed session, so he was not able to specify how a resolution was met. The reason the parties met in closed session is because she was a board member.

MTA Report

Chip Hazen, MTA ADA Compliance Officer, reported the following:

Metro is working on problems securing certain wheelchair models and has been speaking with a transit consultant about a new securing system. Bus operators are currently making a determination on where to secure the wheelchair with a hook. The new system would have a device that would

mark the appropriate place on the wheelchair where a securement hook from the bus would be attached.

REPORT OF GORDON ANTHONY, SENIOR DEPUTY COMPLIANCE OFFICER

In absence of Mr. Anthony, Kurt Hagen reported:

- Gordon Anthony is still on leave and it is uncertain as to when he will return to work.
- The Office of Affirmative Action Compliance (OAAC) is continuing the Transition Plan and Self-Evaluation Plan updates for various Los Angeles County Departments. They will be commencing with an additional set of 20 County Departments.
- The OAAC is working with County Counsel and the Sheriff's Department regarding Disability Rights Legal Center's lawsuit against the Sheriff's Department over accessibility of the jail system.
- There are many projects under the Maintenance Fund to update structures at County Department buildings so they can be ADA-compliant.

ITEMS NOT POSTED FOR CONSIDERATION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

Joan Taylor, Ed.D. Director for Senior Opportunities, requested that the MTA Report be continued to the next meeting and that it include the Immediate Needs Program.

Daniel Garcia recommended the Independent Living Center as a highly useful resource for obtaining information about the new wheelchair securement system.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:31 p.m. in memory of the victims of the Chatsworth Metrolink train accident, newscaster George Putnam and television food critic Elmer Dills.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Janet A. Neal, 1st Vice President
Harley D. Rubenstein, 2nd Vice President
Wan-Chun Chang
Donna Pomerantz
Alexia Teran
John B. Troost

Board of Supervisors

Rosemary Osuna, Staff
Martha Arana, Staff

Guests

Daniel Garcia, Community Rehabilitation
Services, Inc.
Jesse Padilla, East Los Angeles Regional
Center
Magda Carrero, East Los Angeles
Regional Center
Martin Browne, City of Whittier
Joan Taylor, Senior Disabled Transport
Subsidies
Alex Ghaffari, The Steve Grissom Relief
Fund
Chip Hazen, ADA Compliance Officer of
L.A. County Metropolitan
Transportation Authority

Excused Absence

Kecia Weller, President
Bud Siegel, Treasurer
Michael Gureckas
Maria Mustelier-Parrish
Wendy L. Welt
Sheila Wright

Los Angeles County

Kurt Hagen, OAAC

Ken Metz, Community Advisory
Committee